

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
Washington 25, D. C.

C O P Y

December 23, 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: U. S. Policy on Outer Space (NSC 5918) (C)

1. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have reviewed the draft statement of policy on the above subject prepared by the National Aeronautics and Space Council (NASC), and considered at the informal meeting of the NASC on 23 November 1959. The draft revision is scheduled for consideration by the National Security Council at a joint meeting with the National Aeronautics and Space Council on Tuesday, 29 December 1959, and is intended, if adopted, to supersede NSC 5814/1.

2. Subject to the comments and recommendations contained in the Appendix hereto, the draft "U. S. Policy on Outer Space" (NSC 5918) is acceptable.

3. It is recommended that this memorandum with its attachment form the basis of your position on this matter.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:



(SIGNED)

N. F. TWining,  
Chairman,  
Joint Chiefs of Staff.

A P P E N D I X

SPECIFIC COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON DIVERGENT VIEWS CONTAINED  
IN THE DRAFT, "U. S. POLICY ON OUTER SPACE" (NSC 5918) (C)

1. Subparagraph 31(b), page 10. Support the majority view.
2. Paragraph 32, page 11. Support the majority view.
3. Paragraph 42, page 12. Support the majority view.
4. Paragraphs 45<sup>1</sup>, 45<sup>2</sup>, and 46<sup>2</sup>, page 13. Delete and substitute the following:

"45. Taking into account, among other factors, the relationship of outer space capabilities to the present and future security position of the United States:

"a. Ensure that no international agreements are reached which would result in a net disadvantage to the United States by sustaining or enhancing the over-all Soviet military capabilities while restricting those of the United States.

"b. Avoid international agreements which would place restrictions or limitations upon United States military use of outer space until positive guarantees of compliance with such agreements can be given and enforced."

"46. The relationship of arrangements limiting military use of outer space to any armaments limitation agreement is not covered in this policy. However, within the guidance provided in this policy, appropriate Departments and Agencies of the United States Government will study:

"a. The relationship between international arrangements limiting the military use of outer space and other aspects of the regulation and reduction of armed forces and armaments.

"b. The scope and technical feasibility of a positive, enforceable system of controls required by any international system limiting the military use of outer space.

"c. The possibility of international control of all outer space activities."

REASON: The Majority view does not present positive policy guidance to the Departments and Agencies of the United States Government which must support a United States position in any international negotiations covering the control of outer space. Both the Majority and the DOD/JCS

positions direct studies which could prejudice the issue of the use of outer space by the military component of the United States. For example, both views contain the words "for peaceful purposes only", although the DOD/JCS view does attempt to limit their meaning by the footnote "This does not necessarily exclude military applications." The Joint Chiefs of Staff consider that the footnote cannot provide an adequate safeguard for the United States military interests in outer space, and can only result in confusing any inter-department or interagency groups.

It is important that policy covering outer space recognize that U. S. national security requires provision for military space activities. Therefore, positive policy guidance to this effect should be provided by the National Security Council. Lack of such guidance can lead to a failure to consider the control or limitation of the military use of outer space in the context of U. S. over-all policy on disarmament, and thus lead to piecemeal disarmament measures.

Any attempt to curtail the uses of outer space for those purposes directly bearing upon U. S. security in its broadest sense, either by limitations placed upon military use unilaterally or by international agreement, without adequate inspection and control arrangements for enforcing the peaceful uses of outer space, would sustain or enhance over-all Soviet military capabilities, while restricting those of the United States.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff do not oppose studies covering the uses of outer space within the guidance provided by policy such as that contained in the new paragraphs 45 and 46 above.

5. Paragraph 44, page 12. Delete and renumber succeeding paragraphs.

REASON: New paragraphs 45 and 46 cover the material presently contained in paragraph 44.

